

CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFERENCE PAPER No. 11.

CONFERENCE  
OF  
DOMINION AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS  
OF  
CANADA  
FEBRUARY, 1918.

MONDAY, March 18, 1918.

[55]

## MINUTES.

Minutes of the meetings of the Conference between the Dominion and Provincial Governments of Canada, held in Ottawa in the Board Room of the Board of Railway Commissioners, Central Station Building, on Friday, February 15, 1918, from 11 a.m. to 1.10 p.m., and 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.; and on Saturday, February 16, 1918, from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 4.15 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.; and 9 p.m. to 11 p.m.

## PRESENT:

The Prime Minister of Canada.

The Hon. J. A. Calder, Minister of Immigration and Colonization.

The Hon. T. A. Crerar, Minister of Agriculture.

The Hon. Sir James Lougheed, K.C.M.G., President of the Military Hospitals Commission.

The Hon. T. W. Crothers, Minister of Labour.

Major General the Hon. S. C. Mewburn, C.M.G., Minister of Militia and Defence.

The Hon. Arthur Meighen, K.C., Minister of the Interior.

The Hon. N. W. Rowell, K.C., President of the Privy Council, Vice-Chairman of the War Committee.

The Rt. Hon. Sir George E. Foster, K.C.M.G., Minister of Trade and Commerce.

*Ontario.*

The Hon. Sir William Hearst, Premier of Ontario.

The Hon. Howard Ferguson, Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines.

*Quebec.*

The Hon. Sir Lomer Gouin, Premier of Quebec.

The Hon. Jos. Ed. Caron, Minister of Agriculture.

*Nova Scotia.*

The Hon. G. H. Murray, Premier of Nova Scotia.

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*New Brunswick.*

The Hon. W. E. Foster, Premier of New Brunswick.  
The Hon. P. J. Veniot, Minister of Public Works.  
The Hon. C. W. Robinson, Minister without Portfolio.

*Manitoba.*

The Hon. Thomas H. Johnson, Attorney General.

*British Columbia.*

The Hon. H. C. Brewster, Premier of British Columbia.

*Prince Edward Island.*

The Hon. A. E. Arsenault, Premier of Prince Edward Island.  
The Hon. Murdoch MacKinnon, Provincial Secretary.

*Saskatchewan.*

The Hon. W. M. Martin, Premier of Saskatchewan.  
The Hon. C. A. Dunning, Provincial Treasurer and Minister of Railways.  
The Hon. George Bell, Minister of Telephones.

*Alberta.*

The Hon. Charles Stewart, Premier of Alberta.

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L. C. Christie, Secretary of the Conference.

1. The Prime Minister of Canada, after extending a welcome to the Provincial conferees and thanking them for their presence at the Conference, made a secret and confidential statement surveying the general war situation especially as it was concerned with financial, food, shipping, and military necessities. The Prime Minister then retired and the Chair was taken by the Hon. J. A. Calder, Minister of Immigration and Colonization.

2. (a) The Conference considered at length the imperative necessity, arising from war conditions, for increased production and conservation of foodstuffs. The Minister of Agriculture of Canada, the Chairman of the Canada Food Board, and the Director of Food Production (Canada Food Board) explained in detail the position confronting Canada and the Allies.

(b) The Minister of Agriculture of Canada presented to the Conference a memorandum from the Canada Food Board (annexed hereto as Appendix A) formulating certain definite proposals as to the manner in which the Provincial Governments might co-operate in the campaign of 1918 for increased food production and conservation. The Conference approved of the general scheme embodied in this memorandum, and it was decided that the details should be worked out by the Conference between the Dominion and Provincial Departments of Agriculture, to be held on February 19, 1918. It was recognized that the success of the scheme was dependent upon the attainment of the fullest co-operation between the Dominion and Provincial Governments.

(c) The Provincial conferees, having consulted among themselves, submitted a proposal that for the purpose of assisting the Provincial Governments in increasing their efforts for greater agricultural production during 1918 the Dominion Government should bear one-half of the increased expenditure involved, it being understood that this proposal contemplated that the Dominion assistance should be granted to any Province only in respect of such new or extra measures as should be adopted by the Province beyond its ordinary programme, and that it was not concerned with the

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question of breaking new land for production in 1919, which was recognized as a special problem. The Dominion Ministers undertook to submit this proposal to the Dominion Government, and it was understood that the Conference between the Dominion and Provincial Departments of Agriculture, to be held on February 19, 1918, should submit estimates of what amount would be required by each Province.

(d) The proposals of the Dominion Government for breaking large areas of new land during this year for the purposes of increased food production in 1919 were considered, and it was agreed that the Provincial Governments would co-operate in the administration of the project, and undertake the collection, from the farmers concerned, if the Dominion Government arranged to advance moneys for this purpose.

(e) The Chairman suggested that the Premier of each Province should make a statement, to be used in the publicity campaign of the Canada Food Board, urging upon the people of Canada the imperative necessity for increased food production and conservation.

(f) A question having been raised as to how far the complete facts concerning the world food situation should be made public, it was decided that the Minister of Agriculture of Canada and the Canada Food Board should prepare a statement which might be used by Provincial Ministers as a basis for public discussion in connection with their efforts towards securing increased production and conservation.

3. (a) The Conference considered the question of the labour conditions affecting agricultural production. The Vice-Chairman of the War Committee explained the conclusions reached at the recent Conference held in Ottawa between the War Committee and the representatives of organized labour, with special reference to the questions of alien enemy labour and the conscription of labour generally and the attitude of the representatives of organized labour toward these questions.

(b) The Conference recognized that, in order to secure an adequate supply of agricultural labour and to ensure its most effective distribution, it was desirable that there should be, in each Province, a Labour Bureau under the control of the Provincial Government, and that there should be at Ottawa a Dominion Labour Bureau which should act as a clearing house for the Provincial Bureaus, collecting information from each Bureau and from other sources, and disseminating it to all the Bureaus as occasion might require. It appeared that all the Provinces of the Dominion, excepting two, either have Labour Bureaus in existence or have completed plans for their immediate establishment. It was recognized that the Provincial Labour Bureaus should undertake within their respective jurisdictions the distribution of the labour secured. The Provincial representatives pointed out the desirability of having special arrangements for the transportation of labour, not only during harvest time, but also during seeding time, and at other periods of the year when special conditions might require such arrangements.

(c) A question having been raised as to whether private employment agencies should be allowed to continue to exist, the consensus of opinion was that it would be desirable that such agencies should be abolished.

4. As the question of the sale of school lands affected primarily the three Prairie Provinces it was arranged that it should be discussed between the Minister of the Interior and the representatives of these Provinces.

5. (a) The Conference discussed the subject of the return of soldiers to civil life, including the care of returned soldiers, vocational training and rehabilitation, opportunities for employment and land settlement. The President of the Military Hospitals Commission explained certain aspects of the work being carried on under his direction, with special reference to the suggestions adopted at the Conference between the Dominion and Provincial Governments held in Ottawa in October, 1915,

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and the Minister of Militia and Defence made a statement concerning the steps being taken to provide for the demobilization of Canadian troops at the conclusion of the war.

(b) The President of the Military Hospitals Commission intimated to the Conference that further steps would be taken to co-ordinate the various Provincial organizations which exist for the purpose of finding employment for returned soldiers, and that with this end in view a sufficient number of experts would be appointed by the Dominion authorities to confer with and advise Provincial organizations.

(c) The President of the Military Hospitals Commission expressed a desire that provisions be made by provincial organizations whereby a record shall be kept of the name, residence, and occupation of each soldier who returns to Canada, for the purpose of having readily available information as to the extent to which returned soldiers are continuously provided with suitable employment.

(d) The Conference approved the suggestion made by the Minister of Militia and Defence to the effect that proposals should be formulated without delay by the Dominion Government for the purpose of devising ways and means whereby suitable employment may be made available for the large number of soldiers who, upon the conclusion of the war, will be discharged during the period of demobilization, and that if deemed necessary the Dominion authorities arrange for a further Conference to consider such proposals.

(e) The Minister of the Interior made a statement to the Conference outlining the Soldier Settlement Act, 1917, and the steps taken toward bringing it into effect. The Minister pointed out that in order to prevent overlapping between the Dominion Act and similar Provincial Acts, it would be necessary to hold a Conference between the Dominion Soldier Settlement Board, while not yet ready to suggest a date for such a Conference, were working towards that end as speedily as possible. A general exchange of views took place on the subject of the provisions that should be made for encouraging the settlement of returned soldiers on the land.

6. (a) The Conference considered at length the question of fuel production and distribution, including provision for anticipated shortage during the coming year. In the absence from Ottawa of the Fuel Controller for Canada, the Deputy Fuel Controller, Mr. C. W. Peterson, attended the Conference for purposes of consultation.

(b) With a view to the better regulating and controlling of any fuel situation which may hereafter arise in any part of Canada, the Conference approved the proposal made by the Dominion authorities (as embodied in the memorandum of February 16, 1918, from the Fuel Controller, hereto annexed as Appendix B) that upon the request of any Provincial Government a Provincial Fuel Controller be appointed, with such powers and duties as may be agreed upon by the Dominion Fuel Controller and the Provincial authorities concerned.

The Hon. G. H. Murray, the Hon. H. C. Brewster, and the Hon. Charles Stewart, were appointed a Subcommittee of the Conference to examine the draft regulations proposed in the memorandum from the Fuel Controller, and to suggest any modification which might seem necessary.

(c) It was arranged that the question as to the desirability of further briquetting experiments with the low-grade lignites of the West should be taken up between representatives of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Governments and the Dominion Government.

7. (a) The Minister of Immigration and Colonization made a statement to the Conference, surveying in general certain aspects of the problem confronting Canada in respect of immigration and colonization. The Minister pointed out the importance

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attached to these subjects by reason of the fact that the enormous obligations incurred by Canada for the purposes of the war and for railway development could only be taken care of by increasing the productive capacity of the Dominion, and that this in turn could only be achieved by increasing our man-power. The Minister suggested the desirability of taking steps both to ensure the fullest co-operation between the Dominion and Provincial Governments and to avoid any overlapping of effort and expenditure.

(b) The Minister requested the Provincial conferees to discuss with their officials the question of the desirability of having an inventory taken of all agricultural lands in Canada available for settlement, such an inventory to include, for example, information as to the location, character, price, etc., information as to lands held by speculators in the West, and information as to abandoned and tenant farms in the East. Various questions as to how the inventory should be taken, what information should be obtained, and what authority should bear the expenses, would have to be considered. Owing to the desire of the Conference to conclude its labours on the evening of February 16, it was agreed that the discussion of the problems involved in the question of immigration and land settlement should be deferred and that, if thought advisable, a further Conference should be held at a later date with a view to going into the matter fully. In the meantime it was understood that the Minister of Immigration and Colonization would personally confer with the provincial authorities respecting certain aspects of the subject.

8. The representatives of the Eastern Provinces having received no notice that the question of the transfer of natural resources to the Western Provinces had been proposed for discussion at the Conference, it was arranged that the Western Provinces should make their representations on the subject to the Dominion Government after the conclusion of the Conference, and it was understood that the Governments of the Eastern Provinces should be given an opportunity to make such representations as they might desire at a later date.

9. At the conclusion of the business of the Conference, after conveying the regrets of the Prime Minister that he was unable to be present at the last meeting, the Minister of Immigration and Colonization, on behalf of the Dominion Government, thanked the representatives of the Provinces for their attendance at the Conference, and for their advice, and expressed his appreciation of the results which had been accomplished.

## APPENDIX A.

**Memorandum of proposals made by the Canada Food Board to the Conference between the Dominion and Provincial Governments, February, 1918, respecting Provincial co-operation in the food production campaign of 1918.**

The Provincial Government in each province to constitute itself a War Committee for production, to work in co-operation with the Canada Food Board.

## AIMS.

1. (a) To plant this spring every acre possible of wheat, oats, barley, and rye.
- (b) To bring into cultivation every acre possible of new land for crop in 1919.
- (c) To increase cattle, hogs, and sheep to the greatest possible extent.

2. (a) To secure cultivation of gardens and vacant lots in towns and cities with a view to raising the maximum amount of vegetables. This should be accomplished through the municipal or existing organizations in such manner as will ensure proper supervision.

(b) By encouraging every householder in small towns and villages to secure and raise one pig through the season, with a view to utilizing all garbage for food.

#### METHODS.

1. Provincial Governments to see that the proper quantity of seed is available and distributed in their Provinces.

2. Provincial Governments to undertake the work of ascertaining the form of assistance which may be required by their farmers in order to secure the breaking, in 1918, of a definite increased acreage of new land more than would normally be broken for crop next year.

3. Assistance of Provincial Departments of Agriculture in taking orders for tractors and forwarding same to the Canada Food Board, Ottawa.

4. (a) Assistance of the Provinces, through their Educational Departments, in making teen-age boys available, for providing that such boys shall not lose their educational standing through absence from school for the purpose of working on farms.

(b) Co-operation by Provincial Governments in securing the teen-age boys as recruits for the Soldiers of the Soil, by means of lectures in every Public and High School, to show the boys the necessity of getting out on the farms and helping the labour situation.

(c) By voluntary enrolment in all cities, towns, and villages of persons able to work on the land.

5. Arouse the people to the need, by way of public addresses and organization, through municipal machinery, with a view to having committees working in every municipality and township.

(a) By frank statements from time to time of the seriousness of the situation, giving definite facts in respect thereto.

(b) By a series of addresses in each province from the Premier, members of the Provincial Governments, and other prominent citizens.

(c) By requesting the clergymen of every church in Canada to preach two sermons in March on this question, urging increased food production to save people who may otherwise starve.

(d) By enlisting the assistance of all newspapers to keep this need continuously before the public.

(e) The Canada Food Board to continue to supply reading matter to newspapers, to circularize boards of trade, societies of all kinds, women's associations, and other organized bodies.

## APPENDIX B.

OFFICE OF THE FUEL CONTROLLER,

OTTAWA, February 16, 1918.

Memorandum for the Conference between the Dominion and Provincial Governments, February, 1918—General Plan respecting Fuel Control in Canada.

The attached draft regulations provide a system of organization which, in the light of this winter's experience, will probably best solve the problem. It has been considered entirely from a point of view of efficiency, and with no regard whatever to transferring the burden of administration from the Federal to the Provincial authorities.

The outstanding features about fuel administration, that must be kept prominently in mind, are:—

- (a) That when drastic remedies have to be applied, an emergency generally exists requiring the promptest action.
- (b) That emergencies are frequently of an entirely local character.
- (c) That conditions differ greatly, and the remedy that would be quite proper in one case would not meet the conditions of another.

It is believed that, in the attached draft regulations, provisions have been made for all cases likely to arise and no obstacles have been placed in the way of the application of prompt and efficient measures.

If the proposed regulations go into effect, the responsibilities of the Fuel Controller for Canada will be confined to the following points:—

- (a) To make investigations into the cost of mining in all the coal fields in Canada and fix maximum prices of coal at the mine.
- (b) To fix maximum net profits for handling coal in Canada by brokers, wholesalers, and retailers.
- (c) To look after the licensing of all importers of and dealers in coal in Canada.
- (d) To prepare and compile production, import, and consumption statistics, so as to intelligently administer the fuel control service.
- (e) To administer the apportionment of coal imported into Canada as amongst the various provinces, and to be responsible for rendering available the maximum supply possible in the circumstances.
- (f) To be responsible for the apportionment of coal produced in Canada amongst the provinces tributary to our mining fields.
- (g) To promote the maximum production of coal in Canada.
- (h) To frame such general regulations from time to time as will promote efficient and uniform local fuel control.

By being relieved of the detail of local administration, it is expected that the Fuel Controller will be able to devote more attention to the larger questions enumerated above.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES PETERSON,

*Deputy Fuel Controller.*

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**Memorandum respecting proposed Amendments to Coal Regulations, providing for Provincial and Municipal Organization.**

Regulations governing the price of coal, and the importation, distribution, sale, and delivery thereof within the Dominion were authorized by the Governor General in Council on the 25th of October last. These regulations provide for:—

- (a) Licensing of importers and dealers in coal all over Canada.
- (b) Fixing by the Fuel Controller of prices at the mine of any coal produced in Canada.
- (c) Net profits that may be charged by brokers, wholesalers, and retail dealers per ton of coal handled.
- (d) Restriction of the quantity of coal that may be sold to any consumer in case of local scarcity.
- (e) The requisitioning of coal in the hands of any consumers in cases of emergency.

In addition to the above general provisions, it is now proposed to add the following clauses dealing with Provincial and Municipal organization:—

(24.) The Government of each of the Provinces of Canada may appoint a Provincial Fuel Administrator, or Board of Administrators, and may create such central provincial organization as may be deemed necessary. Any expenses so incurred shall be borne by each Province.

(25.) The duties of Provincial Fuel Administrators shall be:—

- (a) To supervise the distribution of all coal and other fuel imported into or made available within such Province.
- (b) To develop the demand for and supply of wood and other coal substitutes to the greatest possible extent.
- (c) To create and administer any organization prescribed by these regulations within the Province.
- (d) To gather and compile statistics dealing with the production and consumption of fuel of all kinds within the Province.
- (e) To promote within the Province the greatest development of any coal areas available.
- (f) Generally to assist and advise the Fuel Controller for Canada in the discharge of his duties and to enforce any regulations that may from time to time be prescribed by him.

(26.) The Mayor, Warden, Reeve, or Overseer of any municipality may, subject to the approval of the Provincial Fuel Administrator, appoint one or more Local Fuel Commissioners, whose remuneration and expenses shall be borne by the municipality.

(27.) On the petition of two-thirds of the licensed fuel dealers in any municipality, addressed to the Provincial Fuel Administrator, preferring complaints against any Local Fuel Commissioner, the said Provincial Fuel Administrator shall forthwith cause an investigation to be made into the said complaint, and, if substantiated, may call upon the Mayor, Warden, Reeve, or Overseer of the Municipality to remove such officer.

(28) The duties of Local Fuel Commissioners shall be to co-ordinate the work of coal dealers in apportioning and delivering coal during any period of fuel scarcity within such municipality, and generally to assist the Provincial Fuel Administrator in enforcing such regulations as may from time to time be made by the Fuel Controller for Canada.

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(29) The Provincial Fuel Administrator may give directions in writing to the Local Fuel Commissioner within any municipality respecting the equitable distribution and prompt delivery of coal therein not inconsistent with these regulations, and shall file a copy of such directions with the Fuel Controller for Canada. The Fuel Commissioner shall forthwith mail a copy of the said directions to each dealer within the municipality by registered letter.

(30) The Fuel Commissioner may, by written notice, requisition the use of any teams, wagons, sleighs, and other delivery equipment owned by any fuel dealer, carter, or any other person, within the municipality, for the purpose of systematizing and expediting coal deliveries during any period when an emergency is deemed by him to exist. He shall also fix the remuneration and make directions for the use of such equipment. Failure to comply with such notice or obey such directions shall render the offender liable to a fine not exceeding \$100 for each offence.

(31) For the purpose of creating a reserve supply of coal to be available in cases of emergency, any municipality possessing the power to purchase fuel for resale shall, subject to the approval of the Provincial Fuel Administrator, have the right to purchase from each licensed fuel dealer within the municipality a quantity of coal not exceeding one-tenth of the whole amount of coal such fuel dealer has received up to the date formal requisition is made for such purpose.

(32) The Fuel Commissioner, with the approval of the Provincial Fuel Administrator, may, by registered letter, issue orders to any or all fuel dealers within the municipality prohibiting such fuel dealers from supplying coal for any stated period or until otherwise directed, to any individual consumer or group of consumers requiring coal for purposes deemed unessential.

(33) The Mayor, Warden, Reeve, or Overseer of any municipality may, in order to conserve fuel, upon the recommendation of the Local Fuel Commissioner and with the sanction of the Provincial Fuel Administrator, by registered letter addressed to the owner or agent, order the closing or partial closing for any prescribed period of any theatre, moving-picture show, billiard hall, or other place of amusement within the municipality, giving not less than a full five-days' notice of such closing or partial closing.

(34) The Mayor, Warden, Reeve, or Overseer of any municipality may, upon the written recommendation of the Local Fuel Commissioner, make orders governing the curtailment in the use of coal or wood in public halls or other meeting places within the municipality.

OFFICE OF THE FUEL CONTROLLER,  
OTTAWA, February 15, 1918.

